

# What's Happening in the Arena of Tribal Pollution Prevention?

Mille Lacs Tribal P<sup>2</sup>:  
Action to Reduce and Eliminate  
Mercury in Tribal Life of the  
*Misi-zaaga'igani Anishinaabeg*

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# **The *Misi-zaaga'igani Anishinaabeg* (Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe)**

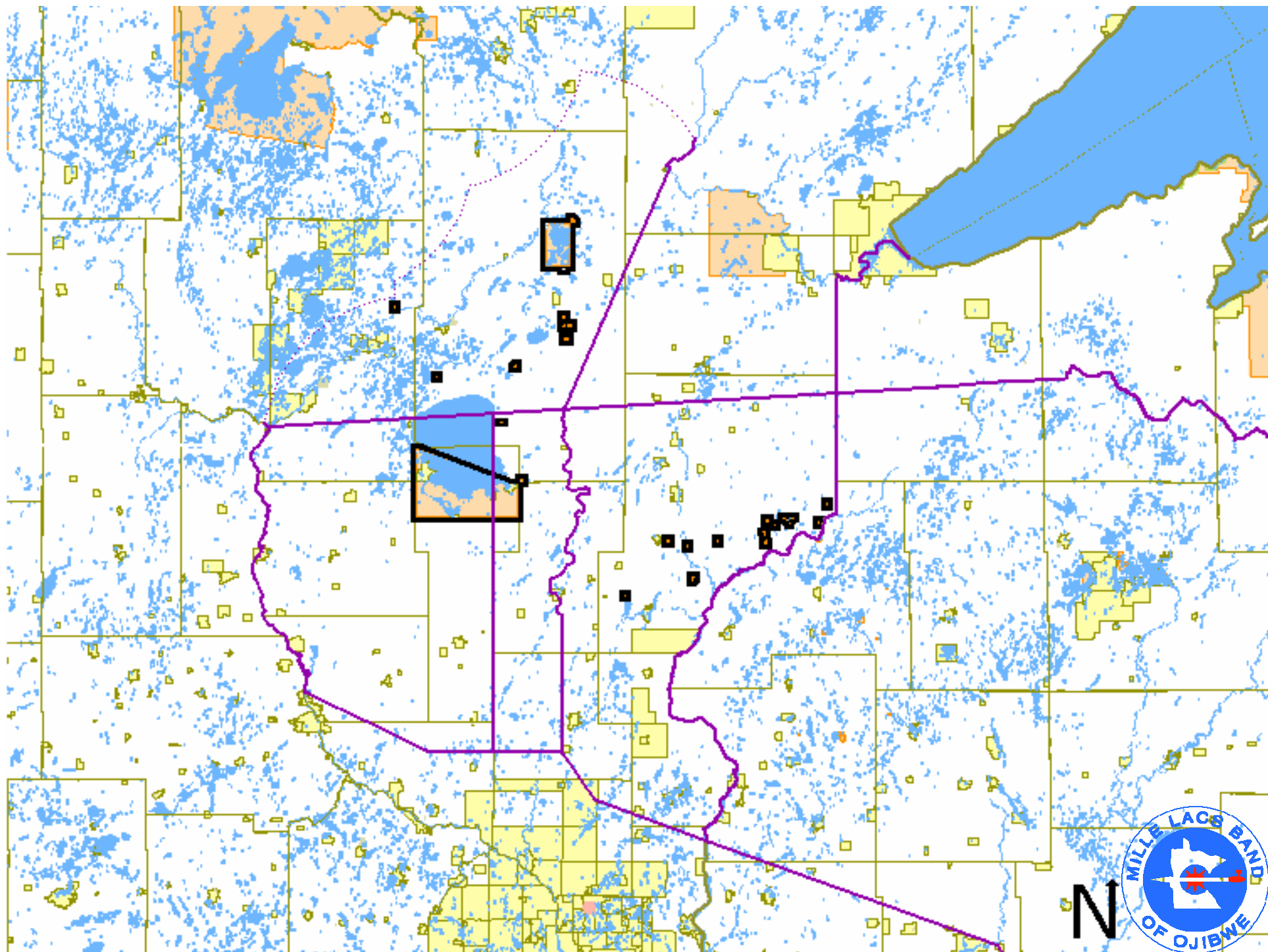
## **Location**

- Two Reservations in East Central Minnesota with scattered off-Reservation areas, forming eight communities stretching from the Minnesota-Wisconsin boarder to the Minnesota-North Dakota Boarder.

## **Size**

- Total Area: about 64,500 Acres
- Population: about 3,900 Tribal members plus family members and employees who are non-Tribal Indians and non-Indians, serving total population of about 7,000 people.





# **The *Misi-zaaga'igani Anishinaabeg* (Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe)**

## **Brief History**

- Mde Wakan (Lake Mille Lacs): Spiritual Centre of the Sioux Nation
- Mille Lacs Indians: Union of the Mille Lacs Band of Mdewakanton Sioux and the Mille Lacs Band of Mississippi Chippewa
- Treaty of Washington (1855): Establishes 6 Mississippi Chippewa and 3 Pillager Chippewa Reservations (10 Stat., 1165)
- Sioux Up rise and Repercussions: Dismantling of the Sioux and Chippewa Nations, but Mille Lacs and Sandy Lake saved
- St. Croix Band of Lake Superior Chippewa of Minnesota and Rice Lake Band of Mississippi Chippewa joins the Mille Lacs Indians and the Sandy Lake Band of Mississippi Chippewa to form the contemporary Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe in 1934 and joins Minnesota Chippewa Tribe in 1936

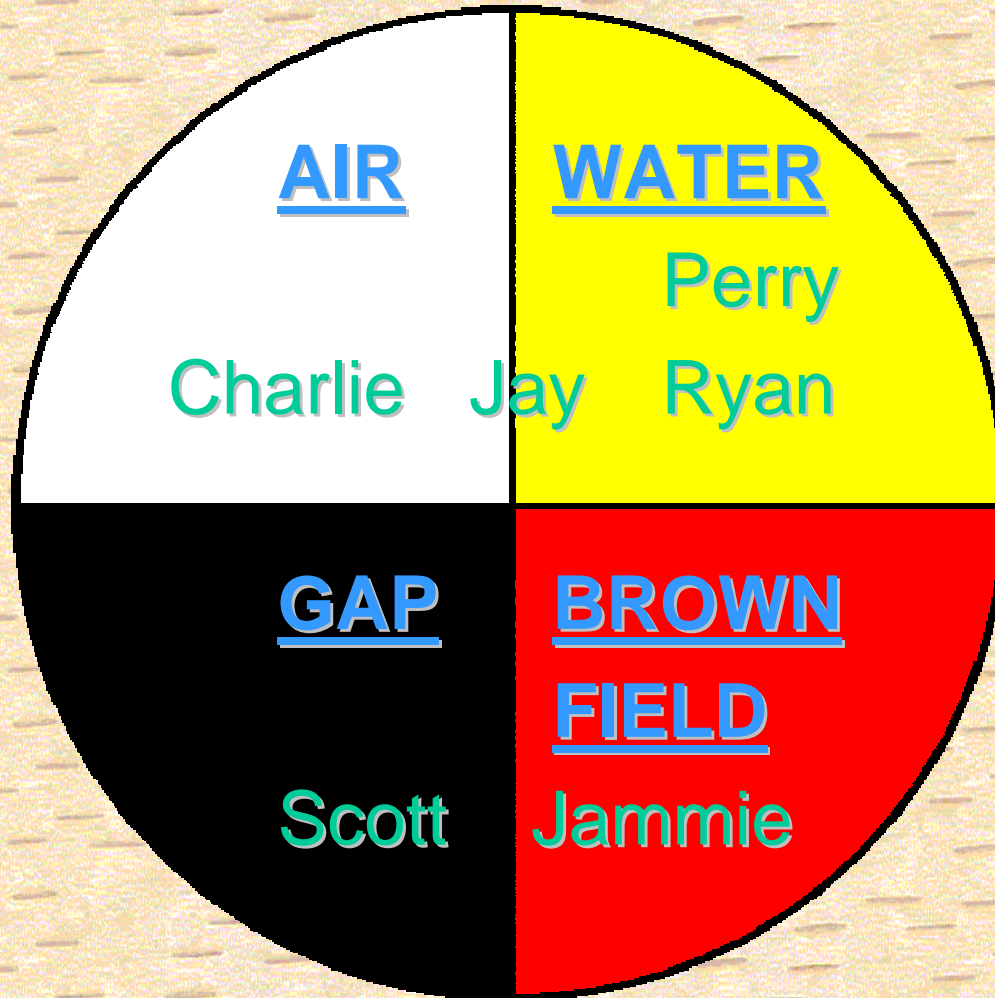


# **Mille Lacs Band DNRE Office of the Environment**

- to achieve a reasonable degree of purity of the environment consistent with the maximum enjoyment and use thereof in furtherance of the welfare of the Tribal members
- to establish and further the Tribe's environmental policies to provide for the prevention, control and abatement of environmental pollutants for the protection of present and future vital security interests of the Tribe
- to safeguard the environment from pollution by preventing any new pollution and abating existing pollution
- to perpetuate commonly held traditional beliefs of the Anishinaabeg to peacefully co-exist within the natural environment and to protect it which provides humans with life-sustaining natural resources.



# Staff



# Pollution is everywhere, so where to begin?

Pick something and look for relationships, both obvious and not obvious ones, and see where it leads you



# Mercury Reduction: the Mille Lacs motive

***Zhooniyaawaaboon* (mercury) found in ...**

- *Nibiishan* (Waters)
- *Wiisiniwin* (Food)
  - *Manoomin* (Wild Rice)
  - *Mashkikiwan* (Medicinal Plants)
  - *Giigoonyag* (Fish)
  - *Bineshiinyag* (Birds)
  - *Awesiinyag* (Animals)



# Multi-media/Multi-venue approach to Mercury Reduction

- **International**
  - Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy
  - Encourage US EPA to address global Mercury reduction through diplomatic means
- **National**
  - Tribal P2
- **Regional**
  - Regional Air Planning
  - State Permit Reviews and Comments
- **Reservation**
  - Educational Outreach Projects
  - Pollutant Monitoring Projects
  - Specific Tribal Projects



# Tribal Project:

## light bulb change out (DNRE)

- MLB DNRE central offices building suffered brown-outs
- Through discounts made available through Minnesota WasteWise, MLB DNRE ordered 100 units of 23W compact florescent light bulbs
- Seventy compact florescent light bulbs replaced standard 75W incandescent light bulbs
  - Pro → energy savings: 585kWh/mo → \$150/mo → less Hg from fossil fuel emissions
  - Pro → waste reduction: 4:1 over 5 years
  - Con → lights contain Hg, bulb handling must be controlled and properly disposed in hazardous waste



# Tribal Project: light bulb change out (DCD)

- New Public Health offices building → ALL ELECTRIC!
- T12 lights replaced with T8 (~300 units)
  - Pro → energy savings, brighter work-area; payback estimated at 3½ years; rebates from local electrical utilities provider
  - Con → high up-front costs (~\$15K); lights contain Hg, current T12 and future T8 handling must be controlled and properly disposed in hazardous waste
- Goal: complete similar change out at the Nay-Ah-Shing Schools, which had inadequate lighting in classrooms → currently 75% done!; ~500 units → more T12s in NAS than PH; expecting greater impact
  - Pro: brighter classrooms → from 60 ft-candles to 109 ft-candles
- Goal: With PH and NAS as models, would like to expand to other Tribal public buildings



# Tribal Project: battery collection (DNRE)

- On-going project; continually evaluating
- Three collection sites (ideally 6~10 sites) consisting of well-marked strategically placed 3- & 5-gal buckets, collected monthly
- Goal: central collection points for better waste management and proper disposal
  - Pro → reduce metals (Hg, Pb, Cd, Li, etc.) entering into general waste stream for metals recovery and safe disposal
- Goal: better coordinate with Housing Department's Fire Prevention Week smoke-detector battery distribution
- Goal: expand central collection points to include other house-hold hazardous waste, such as florescent light ballasts, spent motor oil, used paint, etc.



# Tribal Project: computer recycling (DA/IS)

- On-going project; continually evaluating
- Core computer-user upgrades of Win98 (5+ years old) → WinXP and software upgrade
- Refurbished old computers & peripheral equipment
  - removed files
  - salvaged usable parts
  - rebuilt
- One new computer box-sized amount of unusable parts sent to hazardous waste for disposal
- Distributed computers to 37 Tribal-member students
- Goal: expand to elders and community centers
- Goal: offices without computers to get one
- Goal: create a consolidated unused computer list for better re-distribution



# Visions for the Future

- Stronger outreach to the children  
➔ they are the future
- More energy conservation programs
- Further develop better relationships and stronger partnerships with other Departments
- Have a better “Big Picture” goal assessment
  - What seeds need to be sown?
  - What existing programs need support for growth?
  - What benefits to reap?



# Summary

- To reduce and eliminate Mercury from Tribal Trust and Cultural Resources, the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe is actively reducing and eliminating while encouraging others to reduce use and source outputs of Mercury through multi-media/multi-venue plan, which a Tribal P<sup>2</sup> is one such venue of the overall strategy
- *“We don't inherit this earth from our ancestors. We borrow it from our grandchildren.”*  
– Haida Saying
- *Miigwech. Mii sa go i'iw.*  
(Thank you. That is all for now.)





## **MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE INDIANS**

Executive Branch of Tribal Government

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